

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of selecting a pay per view program to be transmitted to a program receiver, the method comprising:
 - a. obtaining a schedule of pay per view programs, each of the pay per view programs having a title and at least one transmission time and an associated transmission channel for each transmission time;
 - b. generating a menu comprising the titles of at least one pay per view program, based on the schedule;
 - c. providing the menu to a display device for display to a user;
 - d. receiving from the user a selection by title of the pay per view program from the menu to be received by the program receiver; and
 - e. determining a potential transmission time of the pay per view program to be received by the program receiver based on the at least one transmission time in the schedule of pay per view programs.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
 - f. determining if an availability status of a content delivery path is available at a predetermined time prior to the potential transmission time;
 - g. if the availability status of the content delivery path is available at the predetermined time prior to the potential transmission time, requesting transmission of the pay per view program at the potential transmission time on the associated transmission channel; and
 - h. if the availability status of the content delivery path is not available at the predetermined time prior to the potential transmission time, repeating (e) – (g) until the availability status of the content delivery path is available.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein (f) comprises,
 - i. determining if a program is scheduled to be recorded during the potential transmission time;
 - ii. if a program is scheduled to be recorded during the potential transmission time, determining that the availability status of the content delivery path is not available;

6 iii. if no programs are scheduled to be recorded during the potential transmission time, at
7 the predetermined time period prior to the potential transmission time:

8 (1) displaying a change channel request to change to the associated transmission
9 channel for the potential transmission time;

10 (2) waiting a predetermined wait for response time for a response to the change
11 channel request from the user;

12 (3) if the response to the change channel request received from the user is positive,
13 determining that the availability status of the content delivery path is available;

14 (4) if the response to the change channel request received from the user is negative,
15 determining if the availability status of the content delivery path is not available;
16 and

17 (5) if the response to the change channel request is not received from the user within
18 the predetermined wait for response time for receiving the change channel
19 request, determining that the availability status of the content delivery path is
20 available.

1 4. The method of Claim 3, wherein there are a plurality of content delivery paths each content
2 delivery path having an associated availability status, and wherein (f) is repeated until it is
3 determined that a respective content delivery path has an availability status of available or
4 that all content delivery paths have an associated availability status of not available.

1 5. The method of Claim 2, further comprising:

2 i. receiving the pay per view program at the potential transmission time on the associated
3 transmission channel.

1 6. The method of Claim 5, wherein (i) further comprises displaying a screen overlay to prevent
2 viewing of the pay per view program during receipt of the pay per view program.

1 7. The method of Claim 5, further comprising:

2 j. storing the pay per view program; and

3 k. making the pay per view program available for viewing.

1 8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the pay per view program is stored on a hard disk drive.

- 1 9. The method of Claim 7, wherein (k) further comprises displaying a notification that the pay
2 per view program is available for display.
- 1 10. The method of Claim 1, wherein (d) further comprises receiving a payment authorization
2 from the user.

- 1 11. A method of recording and accessing a pay per view program using a personal video
2 recorder, the personal video recorder being accessible by a user, the method comprising:
3 a. determining a pay per view program to be transmitted to a personal video recorder;
4 b. transmitting the pay per view program to the personal video recorder, free of the user's
5 request;
6 c. recording the transmitted pay per view program in the personal video recorder; and
7 d. after recording the transmitted pay per view program:
8 displaying a user interface on a display device coupled to the personal video
9 recorder, the user interface including a title of the recorded pay per view program;
10 and
11 allowing the user to access the recorded pay per view program.

- 1 12. The method of Claim 11, further comprising after (a) and before (b):
2 i. determining a potential transmission time and associated transmission
3 channel for the pay per view program to be transmitted to the personal
4 video recorder;
5 ii. determining if a program is scheduled to be recorded during the potential
6 transmission time;
7 iii. if a program is scheduled to be recorded during the potential transmission
8 time, repeating (i)-(iv); and
9 iv. if there is no program scheduled to be recorded during the potential
10 transmission time:
11 1. displaying a change channel request to change to the associated
12 transmission channel for the potential transmission time at a
13 predetermined time prior to the potential transmission time;
14 2. waiting a predetermined wait for response time for a response to the
15 change channel request from the user;
16 3. if the response to the change channel request received from the user is
17 positive, proceeding to (b);
18 4. if the response to the change channel request received from the user is
19 negative, repeating (i)-(iv); and

- 20 5. if the response to the change channel request is not received from the
21 user within the predetermined wait for response time for receiving the
22 change channel request, proceeding to (b).
- 1 13. The method of Claim 11, wherein (b) further comprises displaying a screen overlay to
2 prevent viewing of the pay per view program while transmitting the pay per view program to
3 the personal video recorder.
- 1 14. The method of Claim 11, wherein the pay per view program is recorded on a hard disk drive.
- 1 15. The method of Claim 11, wherein allowing the user to access the recorded pay per view
2 program further comprises receiving a payment authorization.
- 1 16. The method of Claim 11, wherein (a) comprises determining the pay per view program to be
2 transmitted to the personal video recorder based on a user profile.
- 1 17. The method of Claim 11, wherein (a) comprises determining the pay per view program to
2 be transmitted to the personal video recorder based on a list of selected pay per view
3 programs.

- 1 18. A personal video recorder for receiving a pay per view program, the personal video
2 recorder comprising:
3 at least one content delivery path for receiving the pay per view program;
4 an external interface configured to facilitate communications between the
5 personal video recorder and a provider of the pay per view program; and
6 a controller connected to the content delivery path and the external interface, the
7 controller configured to receive a schedule for the pay per view program via the external
8 interface, to determine when there is at least one content delivery path having an
9 available status at a scheduled time for the pay per view program, and to request a receipt
10 of the pay per view program on the content delivery path having the available status.
- 1 19. The personal video recorder of Claim 18, further comprising a storage device connectable to
2 the controller for storing the pay per view program.
- 1 20. The personal video recorder of Claim 19, wherein the storage device is a hard disk drive.
- 1 21. The personal video recorder of Claim 20, further comprising a viewer control interface
2 connectable to the controller, the viewer control interface configured to transmit signals to
3 the controller indicating a viewer selection of the pay for view program.